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CHURCHES IN LONDON.

THE

VOLUNTARY SYSTEM.

PAST AND PRESENT EXERTIONS OF THE CHURCH, AND PRESENT NEEDS.

Reprinted from the British Magazine for November, 1835.

IT is a trite saying, that we are readily imposed upon by names and words; and it is because it is so trite, that it is of importance to take heed to it; for we begin to think, that, because we know our liability to be so deceived, we are safe; whereas, when we think that we are safe, then we begin to be in peril. We see one portion of the deceit, and forthwith think that we see the whole, and so fall the more readily into the error laid for us. This, again, is trite, *i. e.* it is an observation which we have often had occasion to use, and so are the more likely often to need it again.

We see, for instance, one portion of the error of the so-called voluntary system. It is, indeed, a strange perversion, that men should regard that only, as "voluntarily done," which they do themselves; that all which their fathers, or their fathers' fathers, have done, should cease to be "voluntary," because they have now fallen asleep; and so nothing

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is to be voluntary, but what is as yet undone, since, of course, when we have done a thing, it is no longer in our own power or will to undo it. This is all very true; and if we define "voluntary" to be "that which it is at any given time in our own power to do or not to do," such charitable purposes only can be said to be supported by "voluntary contributions" which have no capital, no settled income, and depend entirely upon their annual appeals to public benevolence. Yet, unhappily, popular language never adheres to any such rigid rules; and the word "voluntary" has been probably chosen in opposition, not to that which was so once, though it has ceased to be so because it has been done, but to "compulsory:" and those who have chosen it have been "wise in their generation:" for the ordinary mind stops at no such refinements, as to what is or has been, but at once attaches to the "voluntary system" all the popularity of freedom, generosity, nobleness, and all those characters with which people invest "voluntary" exertions of their own, and load the opposite system with all the odium which men's natural self-will attaches to the word "compulsory." It has, indeed, been shewn over and over again, until people are weary and ashamed of repeating it, that the church system is not "compulsory;" that the property of the church was a free gift,—were the "voluntary" contributions of the piety of many generations to the honour of Almighty God. But all this labour, and all the learning which could be bestowed, would be outweighed by the possession of a single popular term, "voluntary." It is useless to repeat, to demonstrate, to ask persons to listen to facts; men, as has been often said, are governed by their feelings and impulses, not by their understandings. The word "voluntary" resumes its sway; and, by its magic sound, disperses proofs, facts, arguments, to the four winds. It is then time, I think, that churchmen should invent some new name, which should break the spell of this word "voluntary;" vindicating the character of the church to have been the "voluntary," the system of the dissenters to be the "pseudo-voluntary." It were wise, I think,—and we are called upon by the piety due to those good men, whether kings or barons, clergy or laymen, who built and endowed, out of their own, the glorious piles of our cathedrals, or the humble, but hallowing, village church,—to assert, that ours is the voluntary church. For, as to votes of parliament some time past, first, it does not follow that money so raised is not "voluntary," although not exactly in the same sense as that given out of one's own

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purse; but, in truth, compared to the piety of former times, it was so trifling, that it might well be left out of the account.

And this is another, and far greater, evil of the abuse of this word "voluntary"—that we are in much danger of forgetting that *we* are the "voluntary *church*;" that our cathedrals, our churches, our chapels, were raised by the sacrifices, in some cases enormous sacrifices, of individuals,—in others, by bodies of men, but in almost all by the voluntary exertions of individuals, whether singly or united,—not by the state. And if we think in how many cases our present fabrics are "but as nothing, in comparison of the glory of the former house," as, to take the characteristic language of Anthony Wood, with regard to those of Oxford, "these (the former cathedral and friery churches in Oxford) excelled what are left standing, as much as the best church now in being does the meanest in that city; and this, our ancient cathedral of Oxford, consisted of as much building as the present cathedral or any two parochial churches in Oxford, except St. Mary's," we may form some little idea of the exertions of our ancestors. It is humiliating to gaze at one of the least of the noble fabrics which they raised to their Maker's praise, and to ask, Where are the descendants of such an ancestry? Where is the Lord God of Elijah?

Their spirit is fled: we have come to the dregs of time; or, (on authority which men of this day will trust,) "to the declining age of our state;" at least, those things are flourishing among us which Bacon marked as the symptoms of its declining age[a]; and we make our boast of that which is our shame. "Grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not." (Hos. vii. 9.) Our old towns and cities are recognised from far by their towers and spires, hallowing all the landscape,—a continual memorial of things unseen, infusing holy thoughts which ascend directly to their Author, and reminding us that we are every where standing on God's earth, on a Christian land, on "holy ground." And who shall calculate the powers of their often-renewed influence upon his own mind? Who can tell how many holy resolves, and pure thoughts, and earnest aspirations to the heavens, whither they ascend, he has not owed to them, and consequently how much of his future glory? and then, calculate the tens of thousands in each generation since they were raised who have felt the like, or "count the stars of heaven!"

[a] "In the youth of a state, arms do flourish; in the middle age of a state, learning; and then, both of them together for a time; in the declining age of a state, mechanical arts and merchandize."—*Essay on the Vicissitudes of States.*

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And what do we? Our modern towns have *their* characteristics—the chimneys of our manufactories, and the smoke of our furnaces. And we "boast ourselves in the multitude of our riches," and our wisdom, and our enlightening, and our skill in the mechanical arts, and our knowledge in physical sciences, and the Bibles which we print; while the only true wisdom we have not known. For, which of these exhibits the picture of a "wise and understanding people?"

It is easy to speak of the superstition of our ancestors, of their belief that they might purchase heaven by building edifices to God—of their consecrating temples instead of themselves—of their buying the church's pardon on their death-beds. Doubtless, there were (nay, perhaps were many) such cases; as there are many cases now of persons who hope to attain to heaven, though they live the same lives as those did whom they condemn, are guilty of the same sins, and yet do not repent after the same sort—do not "break off their sins by righteousness, and their iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor." (Dan. iv. 27.) A corrupt system prevailing more or less in the church, (for it had not then received the sanction of any portion of the church,) *then* led men oftentimes to ascribe a false and lying efficacy to these actions; and bad or misguided clergy may have availed themselves of it. But so the world's corrupt and paralyzing system now, hiding itself under the garb of protestantism, teaches men to neglect these duties; or, at least, dulls their consciences, by representing them as a part of popery. And do not we tamper with the world, as well as those of old, by purchasing supports to the church, through the concealment of the requisitions of the Gospel, as they of old did by their perversion? I do not wish to defend any errors of old times, although I am, indeed, speaking of the old times, before the corruption had developed itself, in its subsequent grossness. There were then, as there are now, many abuses of the prevailing system of religion. Carnal men will abuse every system, "will turn the grace of God into lasciviousness," or will "make their liberty an occasion to the flesh," "a cloak of maliciousness." Carnal men now, also, will call Christ, Lord, Lord! and do not the things which He has said. And yet, after all, was there not much truth in what many men of old times did? Is there not reality when a man, repenting of heinous sins, makes great sacrifices, looks out anxiously for means of promoting the glory of that holy Name which he had before caused to be blasphemed? Had not the church more ground to hope that such an one was in earnest in his repentance? Had he not himself? And is not the difference,

at the end, this, that men *now* say they repent (and I trust that many do), and *then* they shewed their repentance in their deeds? And did not God, by His holy prophet Daniel, sanction the value of such testimony of repentance? And when Zacchæus repented of his extortions, and professed his fixed purpose to "give half his goods to the poor, and return four-fold whatever he had wrongfully gained," was it not accepted? Hear our Saviour's own words:—"This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham." He also had begun to "walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham," and "by works was his faith made perfect." And so the holy fathers, carrying on the teaching of Holy Scripture, when they enumerate the parts and acts of true repentance, never omit *abundant* alms-giving. "After intense prayer," says St. Chrysostom, (he had already dwelt upon "condemnation of our sins, and confession, and great humility, and endurance of injury—'since that which is bruised doth not rise up to resistance'—and lowliness of mind, and many tears night and day,") "after prayer thus intense, there is need of much mercifulness. For this is it which imparteth the greatest strength to the medicine of repentance; and as, in medicinal appliances, one medicine comprehendeth many herbs, yet one of chiefest efficacy, so also is this the chiefest ingredient of repentance; yea, it might well comprise the whole. And so the rest of the pure church; only by alms they did not understand an occasional pittance doled out, or some petty contribution to some vast almshouse, or hospital, or religious association, but as they say, "abundant mercifulness." And would that, in every exhortation to repentance or charity, they to whom God has shewn so great mercy in bringing them back to His house after they had "spent their substance in riotous living," were now also especially exhorted to shew their sense of their Father's greater mercies by a proportionate mercifulness to their brethren!

This, however, is a large subject. Leaving, then, such cases as these, or any ignorance or superstition, out of the question, or rather calculating them as high as they please, let men consider what remains; let them count up the endowments of the church such as it was before it was despoiled; let them imagine the cost of the Minster of York, or Durham, or Ely, or Lincoln; let them multiply these with all the rest which they can think of, and then say, whether they think that all, or the greater part, of this was the fruit of superstition. Truly, if they did, we should only have one proof more how deeply we were abased; that we not only could not do the

deeds of our forefathers, but could not even understand the frame of heroic piety which prompted them.

Ours is, then, eminently a "voluntary church;" "voluntary," because "the princes of the people, heads over the house of their fathers, each in his day, freely offered" for the service of their God; voluntary," because in those days "the "people brought more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make;" (Ex. xxxvi. 5.) "voluntary," because it was for the most part bestowed, before the times of popish corruption, out of an earnest reverence for God's great Name. And when many thought that they should thereby benefit their own souls, and looked to those deeds, which God had enabled them to do, as a source of joy to them in the day of the Lord, who would say that they were wrong? who, recollecting our blessed Saviour's own words on that great day, "Well done, good and faithful servant?" or, who ever did any deed really out of love to his Saviour, and did not feel an instinctive joy that he had done it for his Lord's sake? or, unless he had been schooled, and the impulses of his heart restrained and contracted within the channel which God assigned them, by the narrow limits of some school of theology, did not joy that the deed done in secret for his Saviour's sake, should by Him be acknowledged openly before His Father and the holy angels?

And one need not quite add, in this sense, ours *was* a voluntary church; for there are still some signs of life among us, although by our boastfulness and self-gratulation we are going well nigh to extinguish them; or rather, we are provoking God signally to humble us, and break in pieces the work in which we engage thus proudly. Yet it seems to me, on the other hand, that when insisting on the duty and absolute necessity that the nation, as a nation, should relieve the spiritual destitution of the poor among us, we are sometimes unjust to what has actually been of late years done; and we have spoken as if of late all which had been "voluntarily" done, had been done by the dissenters, and that the episcopal church had only been enlarged by parliamentary grants. True it is, that what has been done by us has been miserably inadequate; true also, that the additional light thus spread has helped to discover to us the thick oppressive darkness which men seemed before too much inured to to feel; true also, that it would be a very miserable thing if the church had not done much more to relieve the spiritual starvation of her own children than dissenters. But still something has been done; we have in a degree maintained our character of a "voluntary" church; fresh endowments

have been made, not indeed with the noble munificence of our forefathers, but still according to the measure of the present day. As far as there is any "voluntary" church in the present day, ours is one—or, rather, is "*the* voluntary *church*," except so far as "voluntary" means, that we are to abandon all that holy men, in better days, consecrated to God's service, and then to see how much those of this day will restore; strip the "doors of the temple of the Lord's house of the gold, and give it to Assyria," "take the sea from off the brazen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones," (2 Kings xvi. 17,) and then essay how we can replace it; first commit sacrilege, and then make a free-will offering, and boast of the largeness of our munificence in the dole which would succeed it. This is the wickedness, the hypocrisy, the πρῶτον ψεῦδος of the "pseudo-voluntary" system; for if it meant only that the church, as well as the several sects of dissenters, was to have no grants from the state, this is but what we have arrived at already, our only accession from the state now being (as it is a great one) the recommendation from his Majesty to contribute ourselves to the several religious objects of our church. Setting, then, this abuse of the word "voluntary" aside, ours still, in some degree, retains its character of a "voluntary" church. Nay, it would, as I said, be very sad, if, with the abundant means possessed by her members, she were not doing more than all the several sects of dissentients from her, even including the funds which they derive from churchmen.

But setting aside all comparison with sects, or with times immediately preceding, or all vindication in man's sight, the one real question is, How stand we in the sight of God? Are we making such earnest exertions in extending His kingdom, in withstanding the inroads of His and our enemy, in "giving light to them among us who sit in darkness," in Christianizing our land, as would make us hope that He will lift up the light of His countenance upon us, and bless us, that He will not move our candlestick out of its place? I dare not so anticipate the judgment of God, as to say that we are not; but who will dare to say or think that we are? I mean not that, in any case, our deeds could stand the righteous judgment of God; yet still there are deeds, there are "works, and charity, and services, and faith, and patience" which he commandeth (Rev. ii. 19), for which he alloweth a church to stand; and for the absence of which he removeth them; have we these? Was it not the very curse of restored Judah—"Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell *in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?* Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of

Hosts, CONSIDER YOUR WAYS. Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow it away. Why? saith the Lord of Hosts. Because of mine house that is waste; and ye run, every man to his own house." And shall we, then, accustom ourselves (to take one instance only) to count by tens of thousands those who, in our metropolis alone, live by "profaning the temple of the Holy Ghost?" Shall we inure ourselves, as to a thrice-told tale, to hear of the myriads who subsist by breaking the Seventh or the Eighth Commandment; of quarters of our metropolis which are "sinks of iniquity;" of "hells" in our Christian city; of the innumerable multitude to whom the weekly sabbath is a day of rest from labour that they may labour only in serving sin, whom each Lord's-day is leading down nearer to hell, instead of lifting up to heaven? Shall we hear, day by day, of drunkenness, debauchery, brutality, profaneness, reigning among those who were once made "members of Christ and heirs of heaven," and "turn on the other side" as if it concerned not us? Is all this utterly irremediable? Did not Christ die for them? Did not Christ come to seek and save such as them? And wills He not that even they should yet "call upon the name of the Lord, and be saved?" Does he not yet "continue to them life and time of repentance, that they may be saved? "But how shall they call on Him, in whom they have not believed? And how believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how hear, without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" It is the most grievous curse of negligence and sin, that we become inured to it; speak of it as though it were a necessary evil—as if it did not concern men's souls—as if all this life and another, God's promises and His threatenings, heaven and hell, were a dream, and all unreal, except the comforts and indulgences to which we are accustomed! For do we believe that "they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars *for ever and ever?*" Do we believe that "he who soweth sparingly, shall *reap also sparingly*; and he which SOWETH BOUNTIFULLY, SHALL REAP ALSO BOUNTIFULLY?" Have we heard our Saviour's bidding, "SELL THAT YE HAVE, AND GIVE ALMS: provide yourself bags which WAX NOT OLD, A TREASURE IN THE HEAVENS THAT FAILETH NOT?" And do we grudge ourselves all this reward? Are we so bound down to the things, and customs, and measures of this world, as to have no longing for this greater glory which Christ has promised to the greater sacrifices? Shall we act as if we, too, purposed to

reverse our Saviour's teaching, and to "lay up for ourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal;" and *not* "lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal?" Is it nothing to "shine as the stars for ever and ever;" nothing "to reap bountifully;" nothing to have a treasure, which, when these few years are over, still shall never fail; nothing to have the blessings of those, to whom our bounty has been blessed to their everlasting salvation; nothing to have our Saviour's praise? And yet all this must be as nothing to us, we must count all this as nothing,—if we be not induced to sacrifice of what God has lent us, largely, bountifully, to our own inconvenience, like the blessed Apostles, (for so only were it a sacrifice,) to attain it.

I cannot believe that men would be so dull, so unbelieving; that we should have so few instances of self-devoting charity; that men would think our Saviour's precepts so impracticable; that we should be giving hundreds instead of thousands, thousands for tens of thousands; that we should so shut up all the bowels of compassion to our poor brethren, who, untaught, unrecalled, without (as far as we are concerned) one warning voice, have fallen back into the dominion of Satan; that we should fall so far short of the ages which we call "dark," in self-denying Christian charity, did we, the clergy, more faithfully, more explicitly, more uncompromisingly demand for our God what is his due, and, from our fellow-Christians, what would be their everlasting reward.

We are afraid of seeming to exalt human merit; we speak of pardon, acceptance, reconciliation; but we shrink from speaking of what is one great end and object of our pardon, acceptance, reconciliation—viz., God's glory in our acceptable labour and service through His great strength, and—reward proportionate. The very name "reward" sounds strangely to us; and yet it is our blessed Saviour's promise, "*Great* is your reward in heaven." And thus, since we have lost sight of one main-spring to noble Christian action, which God has placed within the heart of man, can we marvel at the poorness of our attainments? Yet they are not *our* works, but God's, "who worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure." Why, then, should we shrink, or rather is it not ungrateful to shrink, from declaring that they *are* good works, because wrought in Him and by Him, by the strength which He supplies us as being members of His Son; and that He will reward us openly?

By some great effort alone can the ground, which we have

lost to Satan, be recovered; the souls, which we have given over to his kingdom, be set free. It is not by petty insulated efforts here and there, by making up a breach here and there in the shattered walls of our Zion, while the enemy is pouring in like a flood through other avenues which we have allowed to decay, that we can now be saved. The wall must be built (as in the days of Nehemiah) "so that there was no breach left therein." Then shall "our enemies be much cast down, for they shall perceive that the work is the work of God." (Neh. vi. 1, 16.) So also shall "the good hand of the Lord our God be upon us."

Would, then, (to take this one case only,) we might profit by the calculations already made of the hundreds of thousands who, in London, cannot, if they would, hear the word of God, that we would "count the cost," not content with reducing a parish of 120,000 souls to 50,000; but really examine what would be needed, in order to provide every one (not already provided) with a place in the house of God, and with one who should and could care for his soul. It will be a mighty undertaking; but the saying of a heathen has become a proverb—"Possunt, quia posse videntur." Much more then, when the strength and ability is not ours, but of God. The more arduous the task, the more apparently hopeless, the less one can calculate upon any human means, so much the more full of hope, yea, so much the more certain would it be of accomplishment, because it must be begun, continued, ended, in dependence upon God. It becomes possible, *because*, in human sight, it is impossible. Be the sum required what it may, if the work be but begun, with faith in God, and an earnest desire for His glory, it will be accomplished. It concerns us all. London, as the heart of our social system, must be, and is, day by day more manifestly, circulating health or disease, religion or profaneness, the fear of God or atheism, in every corner of our land. It is felt also by many to be the concern of all. There are thousands who would gladly contribute to the great work, as soon as it should be set about in earnest. As long as mere palliatives are adopted,—a church or chapel erected here and there,—it is *not* our concern; we have labours like this, each in our own neighbourhood, to look to; but when the clergy of the Metropolis shall set themselves indeed, under the authority of the heads of the church, to remedy this crying evil *as a whole*, "to lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes, and enlarge the borders of thy tents," then it will be, and will be felt to be, the concern of all. It is the very will of God that we should take a deeper interest, make gladder, readier sacrifices, exert greater energies,

nay, and have greater strength to exert, in great undertakings: for He has planted the impulse in our hearts; we are carried beyond ourselves by a power which we feel not to be our own, with a feeling, and a longing, and an energy, which masters all petty calculations, overwhelms the sense of self, overpowers our natural misgivings and despondencies, forbids us to contemplate obstacles, (which, because not contemplated, sink into nothing,) gives us strength which removes mountains, because it is the strength of faith—strength which, because we know not whence it cometh or whither it goeth, we know to be of God. God has shewn us a little type of this in the natural world, in mere human excitement and human feelings. How often have heights been gained, whereat those who gained them wondered how they came up thither? And if this be so, for things of sense, for perishing interests, for some petty object in this fleeting world, how much more, when the question is about things which shall last for ever, about rescuing men's souls from hell, about peopling the bright courts of heaven with immortal and happy souls to praise and bless God for ever and ever, yea, and in God and for God to bless us also, who have been His instruments in bringing back to Christ's fold the sheep for which He, the Good Shepherd, shed His precious blood?

The details of such a plan can best be given by those in authority; but they ought to know that there are those who would gladly "lay up treasures in heaven" by parting with their treasure here, who would make sacrifices, who look with sickening hearts at the undisputed reign of Satan in portions of our metropolis, at the spiritual starvation of myriads "baptized into the same Body" with themselves, who would gladly contribute their share, if they were but directed. I would not say any thing disputable upon such a subject as this; yet this might be said without offence, that while we have been circulating the Bible in foreign tongues, sending forth missionaries into the isles of the sea, educating slaves, assaying the conversion of the Jews, we have fearfully neglected a domestic duty. And it is idle, and worse than idle, to speak—I will not say boastfully, (although this also were probably very true,) but—exultingly, of the hundred or fifty thousands annually collected for the one or the other religious purpose abroad, while our own homes are left desolate. At all events, this we should have done, and not left the other undone

But it is not such objects as these which interfere, except so far that they satisfy us that we are doing something, that people go to hear of the result of missionary exertions in the

one place, or the increased study of God's word in another, until they live in this atmosphere of excitement from without, and forget that, within a few yards of the fair streets through which they go to hear of these glad tidings from foreign lands, there are tens of thousands whom that word never reached, who never, perhaps, were within the house of God, except perhaps when at baptism "they received the seal which now (in St. Augustine's language) convicts them to be deserters, but avails not to their crown." "The diseased have ye not strengthened; neither have ye healed that which was sick; neither have ye bound up that which was broken; neither have ye brought again that which was driven away; neither have ye sought that which was lost. And they are scattered because there is no shepherd; and they become meat to all the beasts of the field when they are scattered. My sheep wander through all the mountains, and upon every high hill, yea, My flock is scattered upon all the face of the earth, and *none doth search* nor seek after them."—(Ezek. xxxiv. 4—6.)

But for such objects as these, there would be enough, and more than enough; *they* would hinder no good work; such scattering increaseth. The real hindrance is, that we are accustomed to such petty measures of giving, that we make comforts of luxuries, and necessaries of comforts, and necessity of "what is becoming in our station," and a gospel-rule of the world's standard, until we have no room left for any but petty contributions; and then, because a mighty stream has been formed out of the 100,000 little rivulets which have been poured into it, there we mirror ourselves and our contributions in that vast tide, and forget how mean and contemptible they in themselves were. Our whole system of alms-giving and religious contributions is one vast system of self-deceit, in which we magnify ourselves in our own sight; and, in the bustle of what is being done around us, contrive to forget the poorness of our own share, as well as that Great Day wherein we shall have to give account, not of what was done in our day, but of what *we* did, gave, sacrificed, abandoned, denied ourselves for His sake, who for our sakes became poor. God give us all grace to answer this to ourselves, that so we may be able to answer it to our endless glory, and receive His reward in the presence of His holy angels!

Oxford, September, 1835.

Since the above paper was written, the Right Reverend the Bishop of London has (as was hoped) been enabled, in some degree, to mature a plan, whereby—not all, but—a portion of the evil, which immediately affects London and its vicinity, might be relieved.

It had been to be wished, that he could have been entitled so to calculate on the Christian feeling of that great metropolis, that he could have claimed at once out of its enormous wealth, its comforts, its luxury, its vanities, its nothingnesses,—from the amusement or the show, or the animal gratifications of an hour,—what might have regenerated a Christian city, and converted the abodes of discord and misery, and lust, and strife, and blasphemy,—the types of hell—into joy, peace, and love, the outposts of heaven. Fearful of asking too much, he applies but for something more than one-sixth of what is needed for the entire removal of the actual destitution—for 50 new Churches, where 279 would be required, if one Church, on an average, were provided for each 3000 persons. It remains for us to shew, that we are in some degree alive to what is the common concern of us all, the spiritual provision for our metropolis, "that great city," and its million five hundred thousand souls. Should such support be offered, as might encourage the Bishop to undertake the whole of this great task, besides the incalculable blessing to the metropolis itself, (a blessing, which would be felt through the whole land,) there would be set an example and a pattern, which might increase the efficiency of our whole Church, beyond even the farthest hopes of those, now most sanguine. Would that persons in this their day could see, what they will one day see, and what, in the abstract, they are ready to acknowledge, the utter insipidity and worthlessness of those momentary things wherein they employ the money committed to them, compared to the contributing the means, whereby one human soul may be restored to, or preserved in, our Redeemer's fold.

The following facts and plans are abstracted from the "Proposals" published by the Right Rev. the Bishop: only it must be borne in mind (what one is apt to forget in these tabular statements), that each unit represents a human soul; that one is not even speaking of the religious destitution of one generation, but of what has been, and what must (but for timely aid) be, and must increase—the continually repeated cycle of the spiritual starvation of so many thousand distinct, undying, human souls.

(These statements include only parishes, exceeding 7000 souls.)

Spiritual destitution of London.

Parishes.	Population.	Church Room.	Proportion.	Clergymen.	Proportion.
4	166,000	8,200	not $\frac{1}{20}$	11	not 1 for 15,000
21	739,000	66,155	not $\frac{1}{10}$	45	not 1 for 16,400
9	232,000	27,327	not $\frac{1}{8}$	19	1 for 12,300
34	1,137,000	Proprietary Chapels without cure. 25,000	Total	75	Total average 1 for 15,100
	380,046				
Unprovided for in 34 parishes	3/756,954	126,682	Calculating necessary		
		3	Church-room at $\frac{1}{3}$		
Sitttings required.	252,318	380,046	whole number provided for.		

East and North-East of London

Parishes.	Population.	Churches & Chapels.	Proportion.	Clergymen.	Proportion.
10	353,460	18	1 for 19,000	22	1 for 14,000

General outline of the plan as at present sketched.

1. To build or purchase and partly endow 50 new churches.
2. Districts to be assigned to each church, if possible.
3. Nomination (as generally desired) in the Bishop of the diocese.
4. In single cases (if desirable) patronage to be vested in individuals or official trustees.
5. Sums of £100 and upwards may be paid in equal instalments in four years.
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The Right Rev. the Bishop of London expresses a wish to "receive "such promises of support, as may enable him to accompany the "[more specific] proposals with a list of subscriptions, which may "be an omen of final success."

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On a large plan, it would be desirable to raise £500,000.

☞ *Notice of any sums, either from individuals, or of comparatively small collections, may be transmitted through the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D.D. Christ Church, if any should prefer an indirect mode of communication, wishing not needlessly to occupy the time of the Bishop of London.*

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